

ULTIMATE

X  
M E N

ISSUE  
15

THE MUTANT PHENOMENON



FEBRUARY 2002

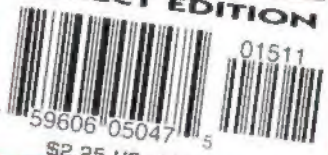
Timesweek

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MILLAR KUBERT MIKI

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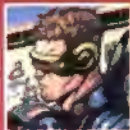
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*Marvel presents*  
**ULTIMATE**  
**X-MEN**



Professor  
Charles Xavier

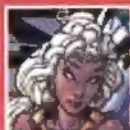


Cyclops  
(Scott Summers)

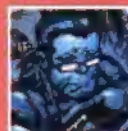
**PREVIOUSLY...**



Marvel Girl  
(Jean Grey)



Storm  
(Ororo Munroe)



Beast  
(Hank McCoy)



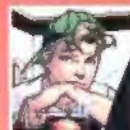
Colossus  
(Peter Rasputin)

WEAPON X, THE COVERT GOVERNMENT PROJECT THAT TURNED MUTANTS INTO LIVING WEAPONS, IS NO MORE. DESPITE THEIR CAPTURE, THE X-MEN HELPED BRING IT DOWN AND HAVE ONCE AGAIN REGROUPED AT THE X-MANSION IN NEW YORK'S WESTCHESTER COUNTY.

HEADMASTER OF THE SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS, PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER WAS PLEASED WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS STUDENTS. NOW WITH THINGS QUIET AT THE ACADEMY, XAVIER HAS BEEN ASKED TO WRITE AN ARTICLE DETAILING THE MUTANTS' PLACE IN SOCIETY.



Wolverine  
(Logan)



Iceman  
(Bobby Drake)



# It Doesn't Have to be This Way

Millar

Kubert

Miki

Can you tell me what a MUTANT is?



Eliopoulos

Stewart

Smith

Macchio

Quesada

Jemas



According to the Oxford English Dictionary, it's an individual, organism or new genetic character arising or resulting from **MUTATION**.



According to the **NEWSPAPERS**, it's a super-powered sociopath hell-bent on nothing less than the **ABSOLUTE DESTRUCTION** of the entire **HUMAN RACE**.



The truth, like **MOST** things, lies somewhere in the **MIDDLE**.



My **OWN** definition of that six-letter word is just an **ORDINARY PERSON** with an **EXTRAORDINARY TALENT**.





WHY we have these gifts is impossible to say.

Speculation ranges from holes in the OZONE LAYER to nature preparing us for life in the THIRD MILLENNIUM, but no one REALLY knows the answer.

All we know is that these talents make us DIFFERENT and those differences make people NERVOUS in these STRANGE, UNCERTAIN TIMES.



My name is Professor Charles Xavier and as I prepare for an international tour to promote a BOOK I've just published, I've been asked to write an article which might ALLEVIATE your fears.







Personally, I've never understood why individuals who exhibit **MUTANT** abilities are regarded with suspicion when every other form of excellence is **LAUDED** by society.

Are songwriters persecuted for the power of their **LYRICS**? Are Quarterbacks hounded for the accuracy of their **ARMS**?





Of course, I don't mean to diminish the BIOLOGY of the situation when ninety-eight percent of all known mutants test positive for the X-FACTOR gene...

But aren't we all slaves to our inherited genetics?

After all, some say MUSIC runs in families...

...and others are clearly born with an aptitude for SPORT.





Are mutants  
SINGLED OUT for  
alienation because  
our talents can  
extend to  
FREEZING RAIN-  
DROPS and  
LEVELING  
MOUNTAINS?

Is our world-shaking  
POTENTIAL the  
reason young mutant  
teenagers only dare  
communicate through  
INTERNET  
CHAT ROOMS?

Dear reader, as I  
argue at length in my  
book, this RAW  
POWER you fear is  
precisely the reason  
that these young,  
terrified mutants must  
be EMBRACED.

Can't you imagine  
their potential for  
GOOD with the  
proper GUIDANCE  
and TEACHING?

Marvel Girl is a  
PERFECT  
EXAMPLE.

When I found her,  
those formidable  
psychic powers were  
so unfocused that she  
was unable to  
distinguish between  
VOICES and  
THOUGHTS.

Through careful  
training, her abilities  
were SUPPRESSED,  
and now, over time,  
are being gradually  
REINTRODUCED.

Her main area of  
school work is  
dealing with the  
MENTALLY-ILL,  
but she's been  
helping police find  
three missing persons  
lately, and is reportedly  
making excellent  
progress.





Storm is **ANOTHER** young student who has blossomed in the short time she's been following my **PROGRAM**.

An illegal Moroccan immigrant with almost no formal schooling, she's currently in the middle of a telepathic **JOINT-DIPLOMA** in both **HORTICULTURE** and **ECONOMICS**.

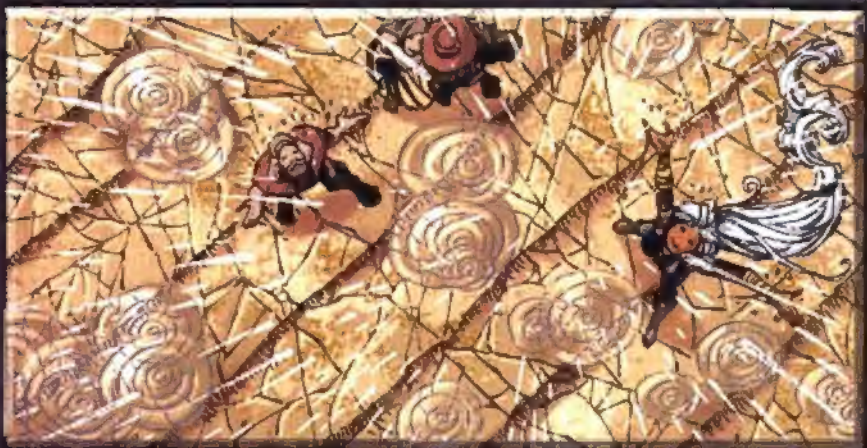
Last week, she used her atmospheric manipulation to reinvigorate a recession-hit **FARMING COMMUNITY** and achieved a well-deserved **A-PLUS** for **APPLIED USE** of her **ABILITIES**.

Of course, there's more to education than **TRADITIONAL ACADEMICS**. My syllabus specializes in pop-culture, conversation and the arts of **SELF-DEFENSE** too.

Cyclops, for example, might have very poor grades, but his leadership skills are **EXCEPTIONAL** in our virtual reality **COMBAT CLASSES**.

Twice a week, between **CHEMISTRY** and **HUMOR**, I ask him to utilize these gifts and do something **DANGEROUS** with groups of **UNDER-PRIVILEGED YOUNGSTERS**.

As an orphan **HIMSELF**, I know he appreciates the importance of a solid and dependable **ROLE MODEL**.





When we first found him, ICEMAN was as traumatized and frightened as any OTHER fifteen-year-old schoolboy would be in his unusual situation...

But his warm heart and sense of humor have been a source of strength to EVERYONE lately; particularly in the late-night COMPASSION EXERCISES I assigned him.

The same holds true for our sensitive and intelligent BEAST. More than ANYONE, he has a right to despise mankind for the atrocities which were committed against him.

But his passion for RESEARCH remains undiminished, his latest project being a breathtaking alternative to the expensive pharmaceuticals required in THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES...

...although, I must confess, I DO worry about the amount of time my prize student spends working in the SCHOOL LABORATORY sometimes.

Oops! Didn't realize this was the ladies dressing room, girls.

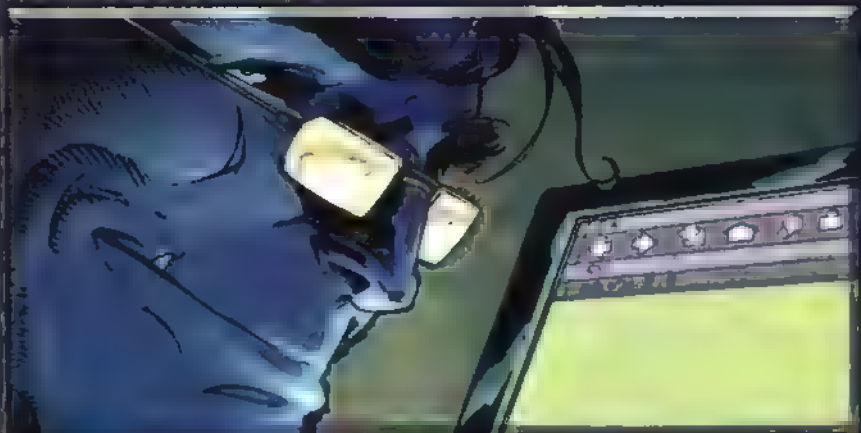


Once is an accident, Bobby Drake. Three times in a single week is a little boy asking to be mashed up in an ice-bucket.





MUTANTCHICK You're my number one guy in the X Men. Beast  
BEAST666 : Really? What makes you say that?  
MUTANTCHICK Because you're the cutest.)  
BEAST666 . Why, thank you, my dear. You sound pretty darn cute yourself.



But perhaps the development I'm MOST proud of is how WOLVERINE and COLOSSUS have reinvented themselves over these last few months.

Both young men raised in violence and misery, they now spend their evenings scanning newspapers for HARD-LUCK STORIES and UNSOLVED CRIMES. .

walking the streets from dusk 'til dawn in search of people who might need their PARTICULAR kind of HELP.





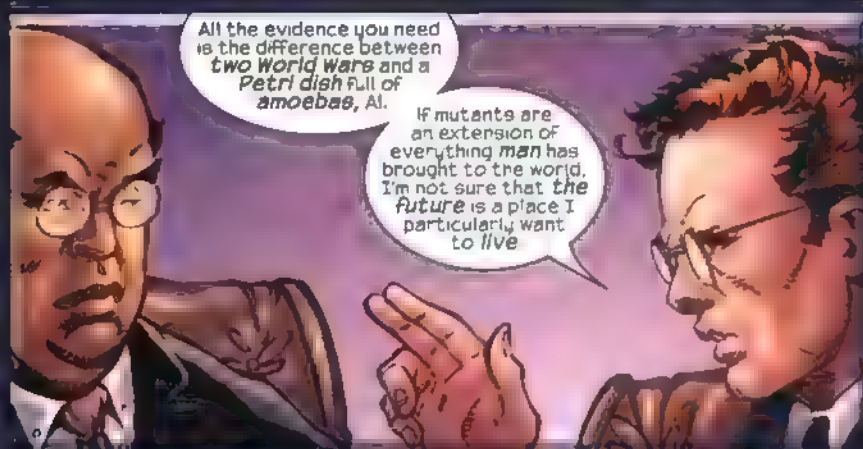
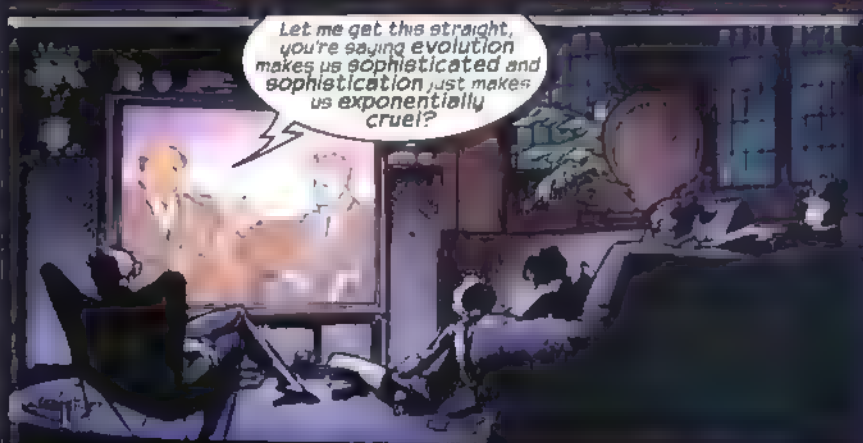
Of course, it would be NAÏVE to suggest that the **MUTANT INFLUENCE** is always an **ENTIRELY** positive one

It's understandable that people are afraid when they see their homo-sapien children declare themselves **X-FACTOR POSITIVE** or hear the lynx to their **ANTI-HUMAN SONGS**

Spike Lee's upcoming **MAGNETO** bio-pic clearly isn't going to help matters, nor is Professor Bolivar Trask's popular theory that mutants have cruelty **HARDWIRED** into our **GENES**.

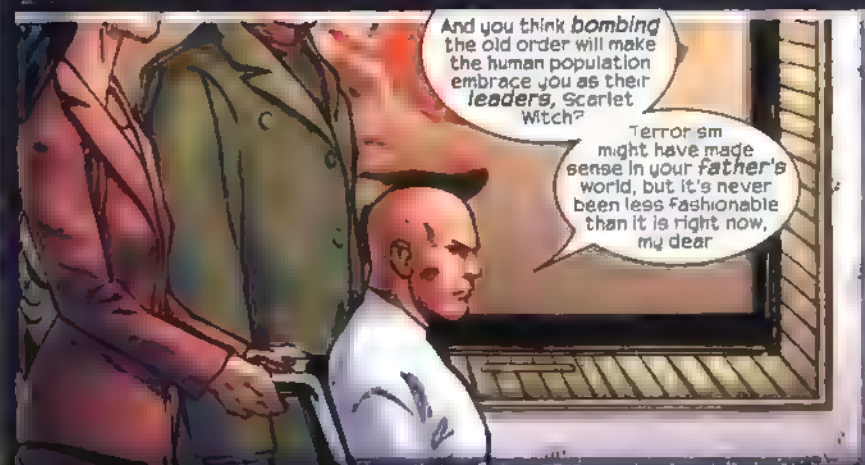
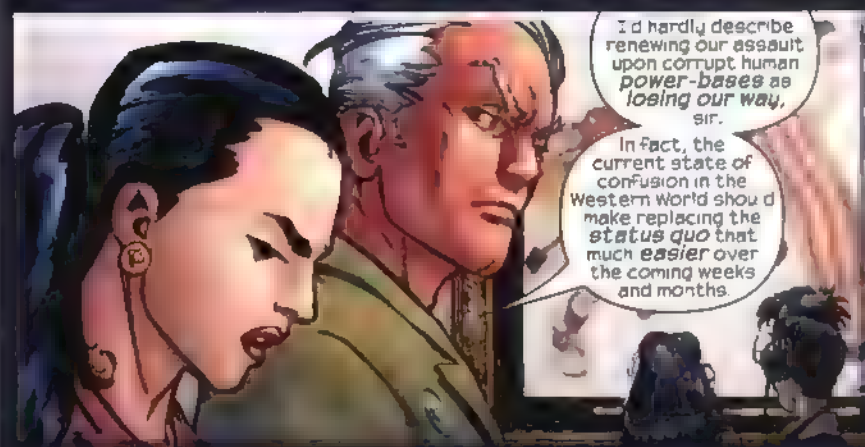
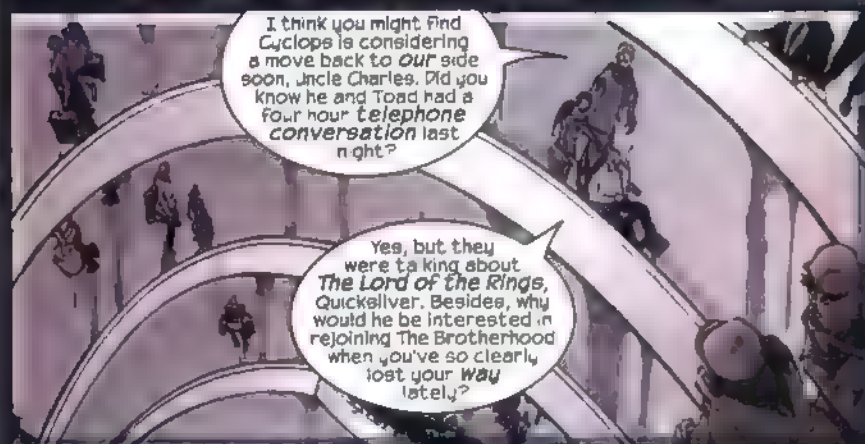
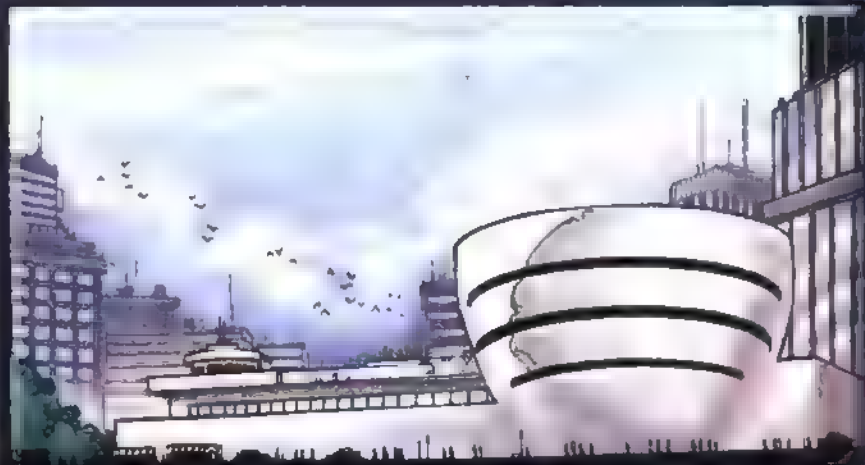
It's a **VERY COMPELLING ARGUMENT...**

particularly in light of The Brotherhood of Mutants' re-emergence as a political force and what they did to the Japanese **FINANCIAL DISTRICT** last week.





My students and I might have neutralized MAGNETO back in Washington, but I'm afraid his children inherited more than just their father's striking EASTERN EUROPEAN PROFILE.





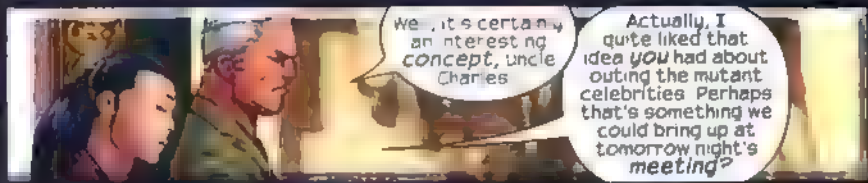


On, what do *you* suggest we do, Uncle? Start outing **mutant celebrities** like some limp-wristed **pressure group**?

No, clearly your goal of global domination would remain the same but perhaps you could **modernize your tactics** a little.

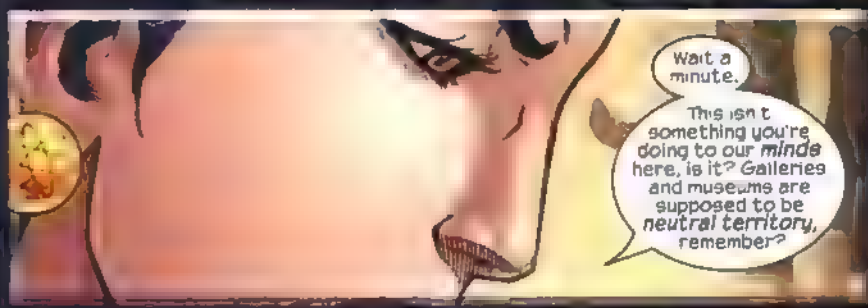
I'm not saying I approve of such actions, but why not use your abilities to expose the **corruption of these human overlords**?

Headlines are the ammunition of the information age. Everyone would be on your side if you targeted **corporate crime** and **government incompetence**.



Well, it's certainly an interesting **concept**, Uncle Charles.

Actually, I quite liked that idea *you* had about outing the mutant celebrities. Perhaps that's something we could bring up at tomorrow night's **meeting**?



Wait a minute.

This isn't something you're doing to our **minds** here, is it? Galleries and museums are supposed to be **neutral territory**, remember?



Young lady, you may question my integrity as a **gentleman**, but please don't insult me as a **lover of the arts**.





Some people ask why we don't just WAGE WAR on The Brotherhood, but that's such an old-fashioned, IMPERIALISTIC solution to the problem

As we look around the world today, it's clear that violence breeds nothing but FURTHER violence

IDEAS are the only way to change the world and, as a teacher, I feel it's my responsibility to PROVE it

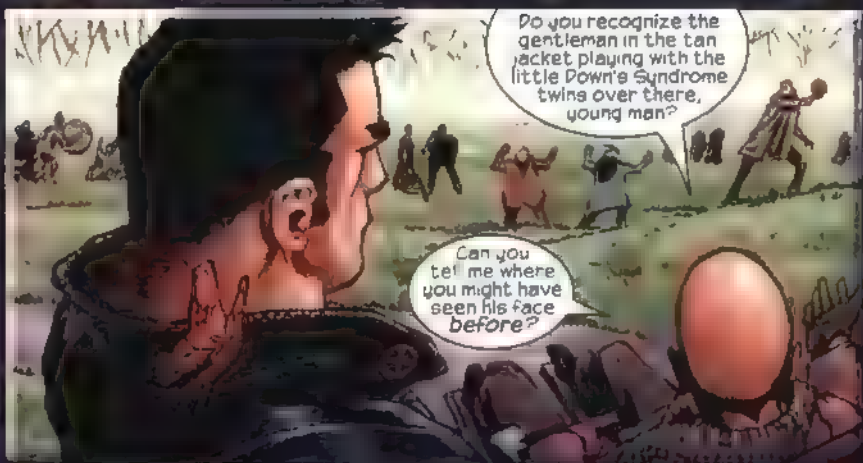


I've always thought it must take a very special kind of person to work with the severely handicapped

Then again, they say the teachers gain as much from the experience as the children. What do you think, Peter?



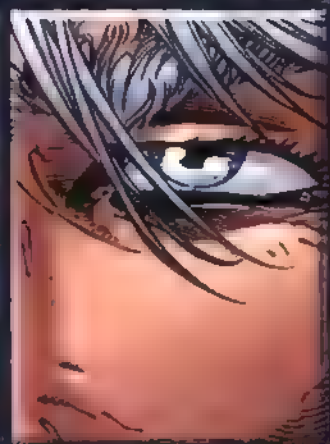
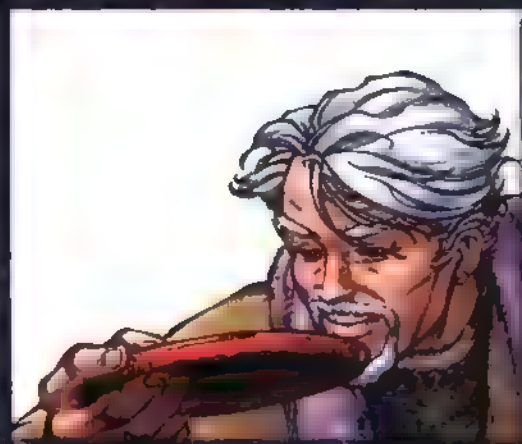
I can't say I've really given the matter much thought, Professor.



Do you recognize the gentleman in the tan jacket playing with the little Down's Syndrome twins over there, young man?

Can you tell me where you might have seen his face before?

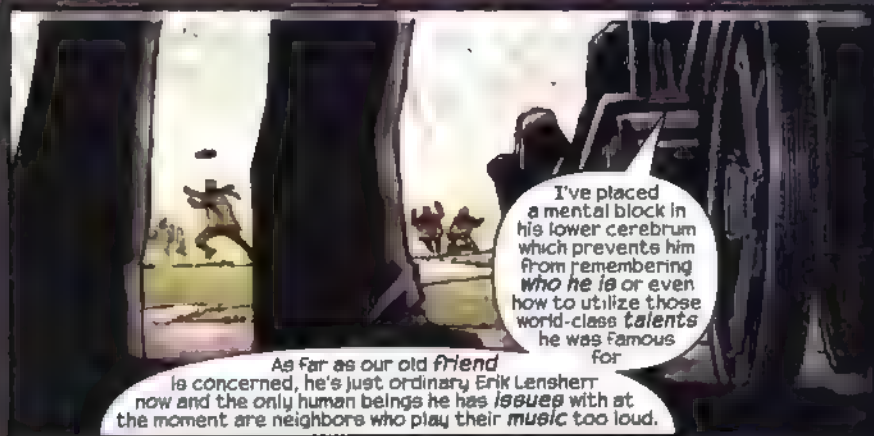








No, I'm afraid that actually *is* Magneto playing Frisbee with the children, but you have my word that there's absolutely nothing to be *concerned* about, Mister Rasputin.



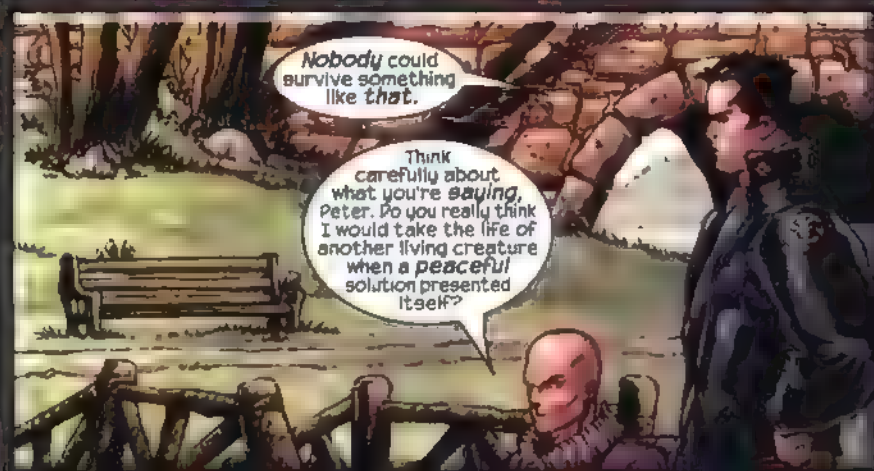
I've placed a mental block in his lower cerebrum which prevents him from remembering *who he is* or even how to utilize those world-class *talents* he was famous for

As far as our old friend is concerned, he's just ordinary Erik Lensherr now and the only human beings he has *issues* with at the moment are neighbors who play their *music* too loud.



No, this is *madness*. Magneto died in Washington.

You wrapped him up in *Sentinels* and detonated him like an *atom bomb*...



Nobody could survive something like *that*.

Think carefully about what you're *saying*, Peter. Do you really think I would take the life of another living creature when a *peaceful* solution presented itself?



What you witnessed back in Washington was the neutralization of a terrorist leader responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of innocent Americans.

The public were baying for blood. I couldn't just hand him over to be hung by his neck in a fiberglass cell.

Post-human problems require post-human solutions, Peter. I teach rehabilitation at my school, not revenge.

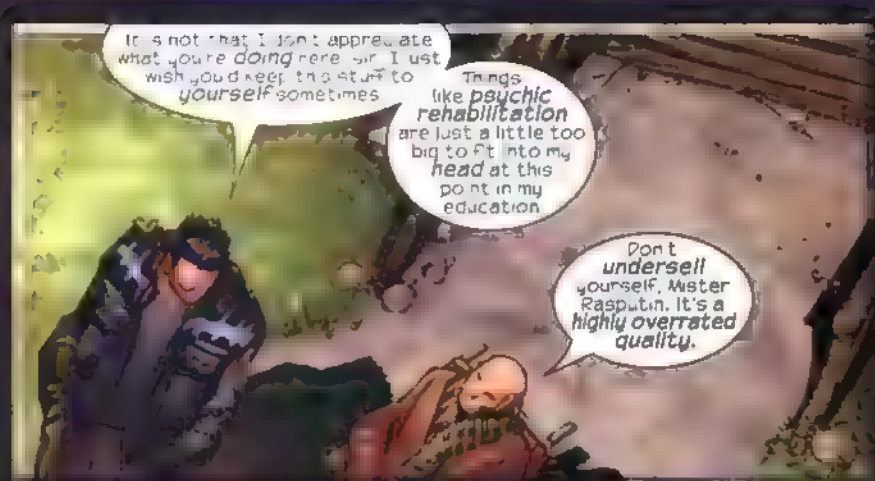
I'm sorry, Professor. I'm sure your intentions were noble, but don't you think this has the potential to be a very, very bad idea?

Why? The man on the street feels satisfied because the Bogeyman has been removed from his life, and dear, sweet Eric over there has never been happier.

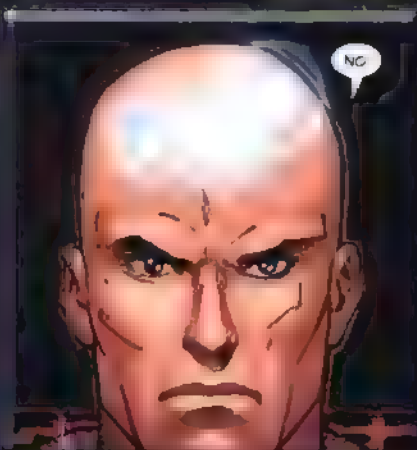
He's living in Queens, eating at Denny's and going to the cinema once a week with a single mother who lives in the next apartment building.

Once his old issues with Homo-Sapiens have been resolved, I honestly believe we might even be able to remove the blocks and reintroduce him to society once again.

Oh, dear God







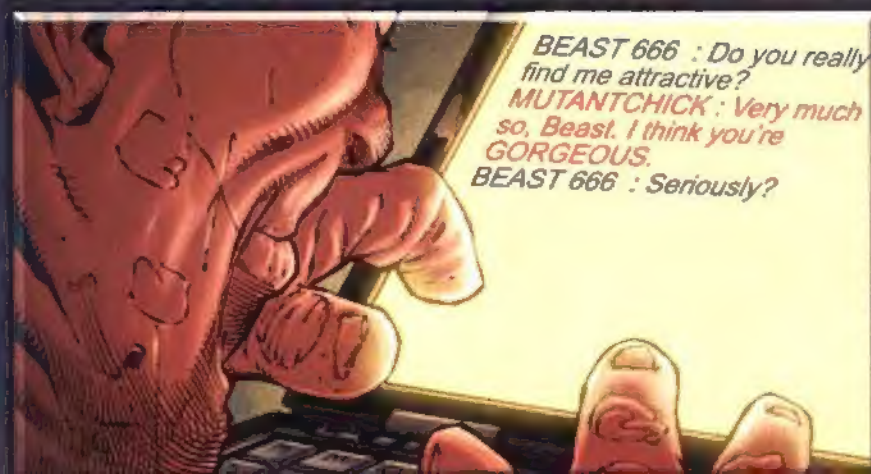
When I returned home this evening to have our picture taken, Wolverine asked if he could borrow one of my suits because he wanted to make a good impression in the magazine...

Cyclops was on the telephone to Toad, laughing about how Storm had caused a tiny thunderstorm in Iceman's large intestine for some reason. I must remember to ask about that later.



He actually drilled a hole in her bedroom wall? You've got to be pulling my wire, mate. That's outrageous.

Hey, Toad! Would you shut up? It's okay for you, man, but some of us are trying to plot our next corporate investigation here!



BEAST 666 : Do you really find me attractive?  
MUTANTCHICK : Very much so, Beast. I think you're GORGEOUS.  
BEAST 666 : Seriously?



Shortly before I began to finish this article, the police called and said they had found the three missing girls precisely where Marvel Girl had suggested they LOOK for them.

For a moment, I pause and reflect upon Trask's idea and wonder if evolution is INDEED moving in the wrong direction.



But although man invented torture and cruelty, we must also remember that evolution gave us science and art and empathy as well as upright backs and opposable thumbs.

Why should people think we're just a mutation of everything BAD about themselves?



Isn't there a chance that we could also be an evolution of man's intrinsic capacity for GOOD?







Kind of a bummer, huh, Professor?



What do you mean, Bobby? About the article?

Yeah. How can they say your piece was too **pro-mutant** and insensitive to all the people who died in The Brotherhood's **terrorist** attacks?



That's completely nuts.

They just **pulped** the freakin' **magazine** because you were telling it like it **is**, sir.



Very possibly, Bobby, but I'm afraid that's neither **here** nor **there** anymore...





Next: X-Men: WORLD TOUR

